Each of claims 31-45 is believed to be allowable. An early notice of the allowability of claims 31-45 is respectfully solicited, as is an indication that the case has been passed for issuance. If any issues preventing the allowance of any of claims 31-45 remain which might be resolved by way of a telephone conference, the Office is respectfully invited to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: January 9, 2001

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